

combative spirit is at boiling point. The Protestant not only contends for toleration, he challenges his opponent to mortal combat. To suffer Catholicism is to incur the guilt of conniving at idolatry. The Leaguist is still more aggressive and intolerant, since he represents the large majority, perhaps twelve to one, and this majority is unenlightened and fiercely conservative. Outside the Church there is no salvation, not even existence. Accept the pope, the saints, the mass, the whole body of mediaeval tradition and superstition, or die and go to perdition, is the only alternative. Both are irreconcilable enemies, both are persecutors, but the stigma of persecution applies far more to the Leaguist than to the Protestant. Happily, however, in France the Protestant had not the chance of exemplifying his principles ; to him was usually reserved the glory of being the martyr for his faith. Nor should it be forgotten that if the Protestant turned persecutor, he did so in antagonism to the root principle of Protestantism —liberty of conscience and a certain amount of intellectual independence. Unhappily for the reputation of his opponent, the Catholic had the power as well as the will to persecute.

Between Huguenot and Leaguist stood the Politiques, who contended that the majority is not always right, the minority not always wrong, and recognised the necessity of acting on this principle in the circumstances. It was the party of expediency, yet it was the party of the highest principle, because, in this world of ignorant prejudice and mental limitation, men cannot agree on the truth in religion, politics, philosophy, and should therefore agree to differ rather than fly at each other's throats. This party embraced adherents of both creeds—the moderate Catholics and the moderate Protestants, few but select, and important because of their character and their intelligence, important, too, because they were the men of the future. Both Leaguist and Protestant invoke the aid of the State in maintaining their tenets, both believe in the theocracy; to both, a government that will not enforce their nostrums is the enemy of God. The Politiques, on the other hand, separate conscience from creed, at least the public creed, and hold that the business of the government is to rule the State and not the conscience. Its exponents were Michel UHdpital, La None, and Jean